MONTEREY NEWS

DECEMBER 1996
VOLUME XXVI · Number 12

THE TOWN

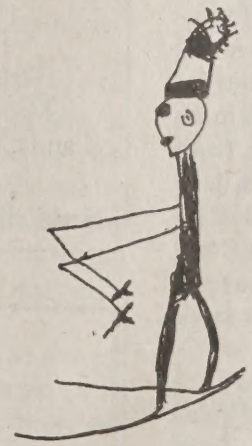
Monterey Number One in Massachusetts. According to Massachusetts Voters for Clean Elections and Monterey's reliable Town Clerk Barbara Swann, Monterey voters approved Proposition 2 (Campaign Finance Reform) by 94.5%, the highest percentage of any community in the state. The vote statewide was 88.6% in favor of the proposition. Overall Monterey voter turnout was 84%.

Barbara Swann also recounted this election-day scene: a reporter from a Great Barrington paper came by to get a shot of an "old-fashioned" ballot box. The reporter was crouched low by the box ready to shoot as Dan Lacey approached with his vote; Lenny Weber entered the room, saw the kneeling figure, and deadpanned, "Does prayer help?"

School Feud 101. The question is no longer if but when voters will have the opportunity to express their will concerning settlement of the one person/one vote impasse currently creating such divisiveness in the Southern Berkshire Regional School District.

There is general agreement that present school district voting procedure does not square with the Fourteenth Amendment (U.S. Constitution), as required by a 1986 U.S. Appeals Court ruling that the voting power of regional school committee members must reflect relative populations in the towns they represent. This is known as the one man/one vote principle. Sheffield has sought to redress the present inequity through litigation, and is suing other district towns, as reported in recent issues of the *News*. The Sheffield lawsuit seeks to force court-imposed weighted voting to bring district procedure into compliance with the Fourteenth Amendment. Others have sought a compromise solution that will keep the towns out of court.

At the beginning of November, a petition signed by 302 district voters called for town meeting votes throughout the district on a plan put forward by Alford Select Board Chair Charles Ketchen. By law, 200 signatures are enough to bring an issue to a vote at town meeting. Ketchen has led the effort for compromise with his hybrid plan for weighted (proportional) school committee member votes combined with district-wide election of committee members, strongly advocated by Egremont. Solutions of this nature have resolved the Fourteenth Amendment requirement in most Massachusetts regional school districts, including neighboring Berkshire Hills.



The Ketchen proposal would keep the present number of committee members (ten) with voting weighted as follows: Sheffield would have four members, and the vote of each would count as 1.1 votes, for a total effective vote of 4.4 on the committee. (This reflects Sheffield's population, approximately 44% of the district.) Egremont and New Marlborough would each have two members with .9 weight per vote, a total of 1.8 votes on the committee for each town; Alford would have one member with .8 weighted vote; and Monterey would have one member with 1.2 weighted vote. Voters throughout the district would elect the fixed number of committee members from each town; candidates would be residents of the towns they would represent.

The Monterey Select Board is presently considering holding out for two-member representation, each with .6 vote. This is based on Monterey's increasing population. The change would alter the petition which has been signed, and could necessitate repeating the procedure.

On November 15 attorney Charles Ferris, representing Egremont, requested that the judge presiding over the litigation brought by Sheffield, The Honorable Michael Ponson, U.S. District Court in Springfield, postpone the trial for ninety days to give the towns further time to settle the matter. So far the towns' select boards and school committee representatives have been unable to reach agreement, but voter response to the Ketchen proposal is expected to carry some weight in court. Ferris also requested of Judge Ponson that he require the towns to hold simultaneous special town meetings to vote on the Ketchen proposal. Alford has already scheduled a meeting for December 12; Monterey has not yet called a special town meeting.

In an effort to disengage from the wrangling, Monterey recently sent a letter to Judge Ponson affirming the legitimacy Sheffield's claim that the present system is not in compliance with the one man/one vote principle, but censuring their method of redress.

Sheffield has courted Monterey to join the lawsuit as plaintiffs, since Monterey is underrepresented by present voting procedure, and Monterey voters overwhelmingly approved weighted vot-

ing in the 1996 town meeting. But Monterey has refused to join in the litigation, which the Select Board regards as divisive and clearly not beneficial to the education of children, which is foremost in the opinion of the board. Although it is uncertain how all this will eventually play out, in joining the plaintiff side of the lawsuit Monterey might relieve itself of the burden of court costs. Janet Stanton, chief plaintiff in Sheffield's case, has indicated that Sheffield will petition the court to spare those towns not confrontational over weighted voting from financial burden. If all the towns dropped all objection to weighted voting, the matter would be resolved.

Such, however, is not the case, and litigation proceeds.

Miscellany. On October 21 the Select Board decided to proceed with quarterly tax billing. Also, that evening Keith Snow was appointed to the Cultural Council for a two-year term. On November 4 the Board advised Jay Amidon to proceed with scraping and priming the exterior of Town Hall this fall, and painting in the spring.

On November 18 the Select Board met with the Edith Wilson House Committee (Lew Scheffey, Dan Andrus, and Gerry Shapiro) to discuss plans for future use of the property. The town has provided opportunity for community input to this cause by providing a box in the Town Hall entry way. So far the Town has received only five suggestions, three from children, one from the Council on Aging, and one from an individual. Come on! Your suggestion is still encouraged if you are concerned about how the property will be put to municipal use. A successful auction of Edith Wilson's furniture, art, and personal household possessions was held November 16. Some art and furniture was held for the Historical Society.

— Jane Black

The *Monterey News* is published monthly under the auspices of Monterey United Church of Christ, Monterey, MA 01245.

A CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY

One hundred and fifty years ago James Knox Polk was president, the United States was in the throws of the Mexican-American war, and the town of Monterey—a portion of Tyringham broken off during a civil dispute—was incorporated on a hillside along a brook in the Berkshires.

To mark the occasion, the Anniversary Committee is laying plans for a party—a big party!—for the first weekend in August, 1997. We recall the events of past celebrations, which included colorful flotillas on Lake Garfield, coat and tie dinner dances at the firehouse, community sing-alongs, and cut-throat softball games between married and unmarried townsmen. We have also generated quite a few new ideas, including a battle of the bands, theatrical programs, and a sunrise potluck breakfast.

Our steering committee's ultimate goal is to invite every faction and group within our small town to participate. We believe that the process of putting together the celebration can be as significantly satisfying as the events themselves. We hope people will extend themselves and become re-invested in their community. Through this process, we may discover our collective hopes and dreams for the future of our small town.

We invite you all to submit suggestions and ideas for the celebration, the sooner the better. Call any one of us—we'd like to hear from you. The 150th Anniversary Committee members are

Dean Amidon	528-1233
Peter Brown	528-3549
Anita Carroll-Weldon	528-6888
Kim Hines	528-6605
Muriel Lazzarini	528-5796
Richard Nault	528-5994
Jack Ryder	528-2548
Keith Snow	528-5850
Ray Tryon	528-2982

— Kim Hines

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NOTICE

The Transfer Station will be closed on Christmas Day, Wednesday, December 25, 1996. For the convenience of Monterey residents, it will be open on Thursday, December 26, 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

The Transfer Station will be closed on New Year's Day, Wednesday, January 1, 1997. It will reopen on Saturday, January 4, 1997, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.

Slogan & Logo Contest

All Monterey residents with creative talent & community spirit are encouraged to submit entries for the

150th Anniversary Celebration

logo & slogan contest.

Your entry may be chosen to represent the celebration on flyers, posters, advertisements, and the like.

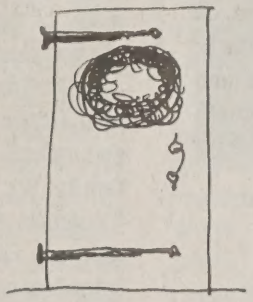
Entries may be hand delivered or mailed to the Town Hall c/o The 150th Anniversary Committee.

Deadline: January 15, 1997

MCLAUGHLIN-WILSON FUND AWARDS $60,000

As Edith Wilson established the McLaughlin-Wilson Scholarship Fund in 1994, she wrote: "Monterey is a spirited village where intelligent children grow. Miss Marjorie McLaughlin and I have enjoyed their progress over the past half century. It is now my privilege to give the McLaughlin-Wilson Scholarship Fund to aid Monterey's young adults in their future education. Good life and good luck!"

Given recent payments from Miss Wilson's estate, we can now release award amounts for the 1996-97 school year. Six "Monterey young adults" are benefiting from Miss Wilson's generosity. Three are first-year college students this fall, and three were already pursuing higher education. Awards ranged from $5,000 to $15,000 per student, and totaled $60,000. Students used these awards to help pay current college expenses, or to help pay off prior years' loans. The students are Kevin Ohman (Siena College), Morgan Schick (Colorado College), Yogen Kushi (Emerson College), Paul Makuc (St. Anselm College), Rachel Rodgers (Wheaton College) and Marta Makuc (Providence College).



A Scholarship Advisory Committee of five Monterey residents convenes in May of each year to review applications. Members of the committee making the recent awards include Jim Thomas, John Higgins, Peter Brown, and Jed Lipsky. Laurie Shaw has been appointed as the fifth member of the committee to help with decisions for the 1997-98 school year.

Miss Wilson made a major bequest to the McLaughlin-Wilson Scholarship Fund in her will, resulting in dramatic growth of the fund, which is endowed and will therefore exist in perpetuity. The Advisory Committee will award the income from the fund annually; the total amount invested will be announced later. The bulk of the fund is still in Miss Wilson's estate, managed by its executors. The Scholarship Committee will make its next round of decisions for awards in May, 1997, when more than $60,000 will be available for the following school year. The Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation manages the scholarship fund, providing for professional investment of the principal, administration of awards, and monitoring the award process to ensure that Miss Wilson's guidelines are met.

While Miss Wilson gave preference for awards to graduating high school seniors, applications are encouraged from any Monterey resident pursuing higher education. This may include vocational school, trade school, apprenticeship, college, or graduate school. A student can receive awards over many years, but must re-apply annually. Miss Wilson established a residency requirement for all applicants. In general, the residency criterion may not be met unless the student can prove that he or she has physically lived within the town during the majority of both the junior and senior years of high school. An exception would be made for boarding school students. Merit is the primary criterion for any scholarship award, but need and other factors will also be considered.

Application forms for 1997-98 awards will be available in Monterey at the library and the Town Hall by mid-December. Applicants may also call the Foundation to request that a form be sent to them. Completed forms are to be sent to the Foundation office, postmarked by April 30.

The award minimum is $2,500 per student; some awards will be more substantial. They will be offered as an outright scholarship grant, or as a scholarship loan. Students pay no interest on a scholarship loan, and the Advisory Committee will forgive the loan after the student is finished with higher education, provided he or she participates in some form of volunteer community service.

Please call me at the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation (413-443-2501) if you have any questions.

— Virgil Stucker

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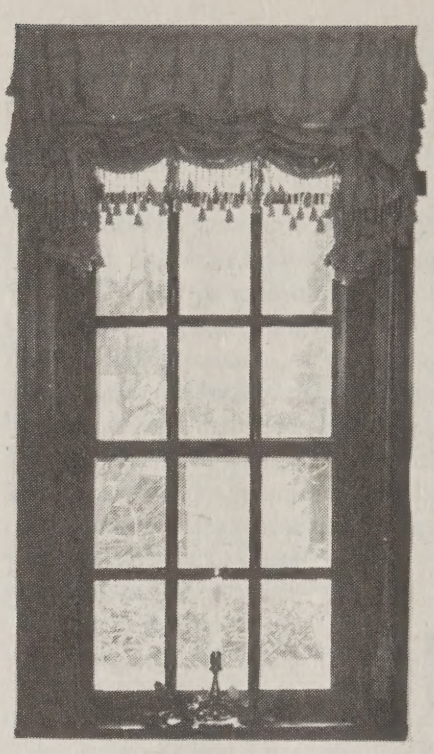

ANITA CARROLL-WELDON

The Bidwell House at Christmastime.

THE BIDWELL HOUSE

The Bidwell House is pleased to announce that the Massachusetts Historical Commission has awarded the museum a grant of $14,000 for the building restoration project. All work will go out to bid and we hope the project will begin early in the spring of 1997. When you visit the museum this coming summer, it will sport a new roof and fresh paint as a result of this grant.

We will begin the season at The Bidwell House with our annual holiday Open House for Members on Saturday, December 7, 2–5 p.m., free to museum members in appreciation for their support. Punch and Christmas puddings and cakes will be served by the fireside in the keeping room. There is still time to become a museum member and participate in this wonderful event. Also, a membership to The Bidwell House is an excellent way to help the museum and give the history buff in your family a great gift. He or she will receive a free seasonal pass to the Museum, a subscription to the newsletter, an invitation to this Members' Holiday Open House, and discounts on many of the programs offered throughout the year.

On Sunday, December 8, The Bidwell House will be an impressive sight and a place of holiday fun for the whole family. We will throw open the doors for "Yuletide At The Bidwell House". The gracious 18th century rooms will be resplendent with decorations based on those of Colonial Williamsburg and made from herbs grown in the Museum's heirloom gardens and hung to dry in the carriage barn. Sit by the blazing kitchen hearth, sip hot cider, and imagine the life of this early New England family. Cookies and cakes will also help to get you into the holiday spirit.

A craft table will be filled with materials for children to make paper ornaments to take home, and more ornaments will be set out to decorate a great bushy Christmas tree. This will keep a Monterey family tradition, because one of Reverend Bidwell's grandsons, Marshall Spring Bidwell, introduced the first Christmas celebration to Monterey in 1859, complete with "...one of those most beautiful exotics so common and so thoroughly naturalized in New York..."—a Christmas tree.

Mark your calendar for Yuletide At The Bidwell House, 12–4 p.m. on December 8. Admission is $6 for adults and $2 for children under twelve. The Bidwell House Museum is located on Art School Road. For more information call 413 528-6888.

— Anita Carroll-Weldon

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The Listening Season

December brings Advent, Hanukkah, Winter Solstice, Christmas, and the New Year. In addition, there are office and family parties. Daily living often becomes pretty intense. Personal, family, and social expectations are competing for attention. I think it goes without saying that we are quite familiar with them. Most, if not all, are what we impose on ourselves or allow to be imposed by others. At the same time that these competing expectations make their demands, there arises from within a yearning for quiet and solitude. Maybe I am speaking more for myself than others! But I don't think so. I think in part this is prompted by the season—winter. As with nature, there is a hush that overtakes us. The activity of the "growing season" gives way to rest. (As I write this I realize that I am speaking only of the northern hemisphere, for the most part. Excuse my provincialism!) But the denial of our nature (Nature), allows us to enter into a conspiracy with technology. Namely, that we can go on living as though nothing changes. Life must go on whether there is one inch or one foot of snow; whether we have a cold or pneumonia. With the former, pour more salt on the roads; with the latter, take more medicine! And we wonder why we are exhausted before, during, and after the holidays! I am writing these words to myself. On more than one occasion I have been overwhelmed by pneumonia at the height of the holiday season. Gradually I realized that I had become so engaged in the frenetic activity of my job and the expectations of others that I was almost out of touch with the condition of my soul. The crisis (door of opportunity) of my body allowed me to begin a journey of healing. Each winter, each December, each Advent/Christmas, I am reminded again that it is the language of the soul, solitude and quiet meditation, that I must cultivate. And with Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds I am able to hear God speak. The inharmonious noise of the inn was overwhelmed by the harmonious (not painless) labor pains and the miraculous gift of new life in Jesus. Once again, the healing word/Word—God loves us—is spoken. Dare I hear it? Dare you hear it? Then you and I must listen with the soul. And as we do, we become whole, healthy people.

Healing Service, Sunday, December 8, at 11:30 a.m. The community and friends are invited to attend. Christmas Eve Candlelight Services at 7 and 11:30 p.m.

— Keith Snow, Pastor
United Church of Christ

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LARRY LAMPMAN

This was the scene at the household hazardous waste collection day organized by the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste District last month. Ten Monterey residents disposed of a total of twelve "units" of waste. The town spent $468 to participate in the event, which drew 109 households and two businesses overall in the southern Berkshires.

FREE LATEX PAINT

United Way, with assistance from the Catholic Youth Center in Pittsfield, is distributing recycled latex paint to individuals and non-profit organizations. Approximately 200 gallons are available. The paint was collected from residents by the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste Management District and the town of Great Barrington at household hazardous waste collection days several weeks ago. The Center for Ecological Technology coordinated the collection with the assistance of two Americorps/VISTA members and two students from Berkshire Community College's Central American Students program. Interior and exterior paints were sorted by color and mixed in five-gallon buckets. Some paint arrived in full gallons or appeared to be new, and was not mixed. All paint was checked to ensure that it was in usable condition. For more information call Vinny Marinaro at the Catholic Youth Center, 413-445-5496.

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COUNCIL ON AGING

On Friday, December 13, at noon in the basement of the Town Hall, the Monterey Council on Aging will host a free luncheon. The public is invited. Foul weather cancels.

The Council thanks all those who have participated in our senior activities throughout the year, helping to make it a viable presence in town. Luncheons will resume in the spring.

— Pauline Nault, Chairman

LATIN TOURS BY PALATE

Cactus Café and Berkshire Amistad announce a trip through the Americas, Central and South: travel 7,000 miles without leaving Lee! There will be a fixed-price feast at Cactus Café on Main Street in Lee every Sunday starting on November 10, 1996, through March 9, 1997. Appetizers at 4 p.m. followed by a brief cultural presentation, setting the tone for a fun, informative, and gustatorily satisfying experience. You can visit Guatemala on November 10 and sample tamales, tapado (fish stew), and chancletas (stuffed chayote, a native fruit).

Twenty-five percent of ticket sales will go to Berkshire Amistad, a nonprofit Berkshire County people-to-people organization whose mission is to foster friendship and understanding between our citizens and those of Latin America. Berkshire Amistad will distribute the funds to humanitarian projects throughout the area. Call the Cactus Café at 413-243-4300 to make your reservation by the Thursday preceding the event.

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Weekends best – Leave message

FAMILY SUPPORT NETWORK/ CHILDREN'S HEALTH, INC.

We appreciate the community support and patience as we moved in, establishing the Family Center at 940 South Main Street in Great Barrington. Drop-in hours are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, 10 a.m.–12 noon; Tuesday and Friday, 3–5 p.m. During these times families may visit the clothing and toy exchange, book and video lending library, the playroom, and speak with staff members. We will open Saturdays and during the evening if there is a need. Let us know! The Family Center will be closed December 24 from 12 noon, December 25 all day, and December 31 from noon. Call ahead if weather conditions are questionable. December events:

December 7 Winter coat distribution, 10 a.m.–12 noon. Donated winter coats in all sizes, free to anyone in need.

December 12 Holiday party for all families, 9:30-11:30 p.m.

December 14 Saturday drop-in time. 10 a.m.–12 noon.

December 20 Pot luck buffet holiday party for families with multiple births, 5-7 p.m. Call Claudette (528-9311) for more information.

Playgroup News The Great Barrington playgroup will meet at the Family Center on Thursdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m. We welcome families to attend the Monterey playgroup held Fridays at McKee House on Gould Farm, 9:30–11:30 a.m. Please call for more information and directions.

We welcome families during drop-in hours on Tuesday afternoon. If enough interest is shown, an afternoon playgroup will be planned for that day. Families with children under two years of age are welcome to join the Monday morning playgroup, 10 a.m.–12 noon during GED tutoring sessions. For more information, please call the center.

The Gift of Love During the weeks preceding the holidays, we tend to allow ourselves to become unusually stressed. This affects our children, who really don't understand why Mommy and Daddy are so irritable. Please take time to relax, take a deep breath, listen to music, be silly with your child. No gift is as important to your child as you. Your love has no price tag and is not to be measured in dollars and cents. The staff wishes you a peaceful holiday! Thanks to three mothers—Emily Olds, Ginger Thieringer, and Ana Vreeland—a booklet entitled *ABCs of Saving Money* will be available to families in December. We hope this alphabet of money-saving ideas will help your family budget. The booklets will be available at CHP departments, Center for Pediatric and Adolescent Health Care, Fairview Hospital, First Steps and WIC, Russell House, and the Family Center. We would appreciate receiving comments about the booklet as well as any new ideas for saving money.

A Quiet Wintertime Activity. Take time to spend with your child in this quiet, repetitive activity. Be sure to set up a clutter-free area that can be easily cleaned where you can supervise and train children to use playdough for a specified time. Then you can put it away for another time when you will be available to supervise. Here are two easy playdough recipes that can be made in your kitchen using safe kitchen utensils such as measuring cups and spoons, plastic knives, and cookie cutters. Use your imagination and playdough to create animals, flowers, tea parties, etc.

Homemade Playdough
(Jeanne Lemlin)
3 cups flour
1 cup salt
1 cup warm water
1/4 cup oil
Food coloring as desired.

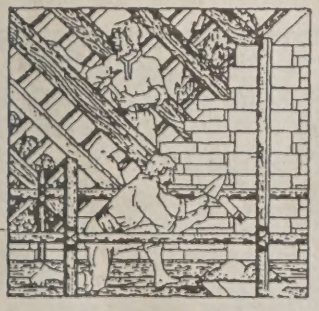
Mix flour and salt in a large bowl (or divide among two bowls if you want two different colors of playdough). Mix water, oil, and food coloring together, and slowly beat it into the flour mixture. Knead the dough a few times. Store in a plastic bag; it lasts a long time.

Playdough, cooked method
(Wendy Jensen)
1 cup flour
1/2 cup salt
1 cup water (food coloring if desired)
2 teaspoons cream of tartar
1 tablespoon oil

Mix all ingredients together in pan over medium heat. Stir almost constantly until mixture forms a ball. Playdough will keep in a sealed plastic bag or container.

For more inexpensive activities to enjoy with your child, a booklet entitled *Kid's Kure for Kabin Fever*, written by south Berkshire County families is available at the Family Center. Donation, $5.

— Claudette Callahan



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REP RAP

Like it or not, computers are here to stay and Massachusetts' public education system has got to get on board—our workforce is at stake. Did you know that we rank forty-ninth in the nation for the number of computer-networked schools? That's why I co-sponsored the education technology portion of the Information Technology Systems Bond Bill. In that legislation, $89 million is earmarked to put public schools and colleges on the internet.

Only five years ago everyone entering the workforce was expected to have a basic understanding of computer word processors and spreadsheets. How quickly times change. Today, everyone must also know how to access and utilize the vast amounts of information now stored electronically, such as on the internet. Every industry is going on line, not just those previously considered high-tech. In order to maintain Massachusetts' competitive edge in the regional economy, we must have an educated workforce. Unfortunately, this investment does not come as cheaply as some would like.

Educational funding is always a top priority for me and my commitment has never wavered. As a product of public education and public higher education, I believe we need to do whatever is necessary to instill skills marketable in the twenty-first century in our children.

Through the Education Technology Bond, we were able to secure $525,000 to provide Berkshire Community College with access to the information superhighway and the computers necessary to equip our students with the expertise to transfer to highly competitive four-year colleges and succeed. At local high schools, Southern Berkshire Regional School District has already received $32,580 in matching grant funds.

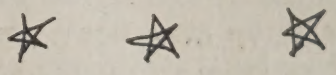
However, the fight is not over. Governor Weld admitted that he has let education fall to the wayside during his administration. Although Weld has denied the published reports that he has no intention of fully funding the education technology bond, he has countered that funding would take place only under a long laundry list of criteria that he deems necessary to release the funds. He will attempt to use this laundry list as his justification for slowing down the bond's funding and implementation.

Massachusetts' average of sixteen students per computer is deplorable. The national recommendation is for a ratio of 6:1. Further, many of the computers that do currently exist in the classroom are so outdated that they can barely handle basic typing. The Education Technology Bond Bill will give school districts $30 per student to wire schools, train teachers, and buy new computers and other hardware.

The bill calls for the funds to be dispersed after a school submits technology plans, approved by the Department of Education, that show how the school plans to utilize the technology. The funds must then be matched 3:1 by the community. These matching funds can be raised through grants, business partnerships, or local tax revenues.

Who knew how much computers would mean today when I was at Lee high School? Today's student can access the world through the touch of a button. Massachusetts' students must be provided the opportunity to compete. We must prepare our children for the twenty-first century to give the hope for opportunity for the future.

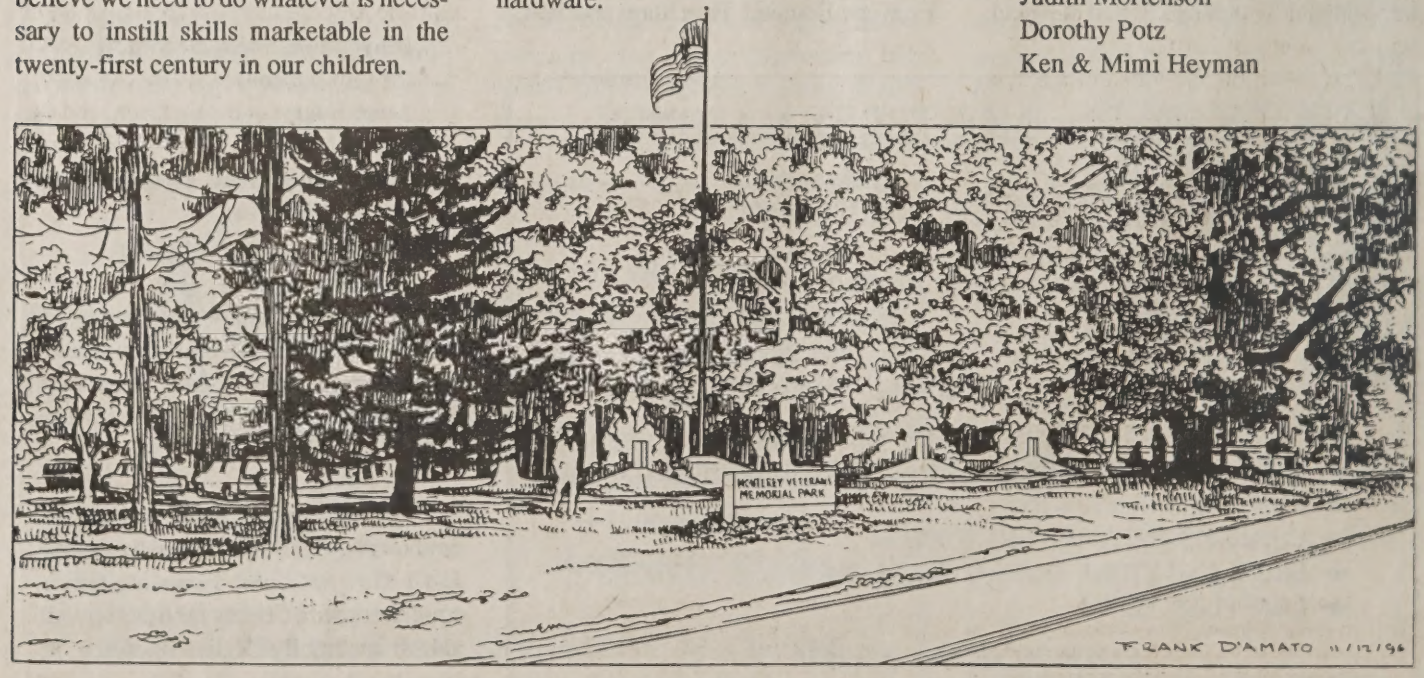
— Rep. Christopher J. Hodgkins



CONTRIBUTORS

Sustained through the dark season by the faithful few, to whom our thanks for your contributions to the *Monterey News*:

Barbara Horowitt
Judith Mortenson
Dorothy Potz
Ken & Mimi Heyman



Artist's conception of proposed Monterey Veterans' Memorial Park.

DEBORAH MIELKE

Dinah Mielke boards a privateer spied off the coast of New Marlborough Central.

NEW MARLBOROUGH AND MONTEREY SCHOOLS

There is a new piece of play equipment at the New Marlborough Central playground thanks to the generosity of members of the Umpachene Grange in Hartsville. The Grange sold their property earlier this year, and upon completion of that sale members expressed a wish to give something back to the community. The brain child of Grange member Michael Britten now sits at dry-dock on the grounds of NMC.

The as-yet-unchristened pirate ship sets sail each day in the imaginations of the fortunate pre-K through fourth graders of NMC. Thanks go out to the Grange members for their true display of community service.

Judy Ladd's combined first and second grade class and Dan Weston's second grade went on a real trip to the American Museum of Firefighting in Hudson, New York. Apparatus dating from 1725 to the present is on display. The children and chaperones always enjoy this culmination of their fire prevention education.

— Deborah Mielke

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"The pancakes should be denoted by hubcap size ....
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and large is a Mac truck."

-- Matthew Breuer, a Roadside regular

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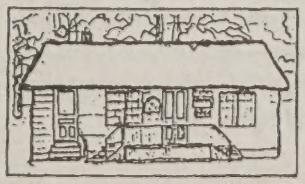


MONTEREY GRANGE

Monterey Grange No. 291 met on November 20 for a harvest supper, followed by a business meeting and thanksgiving program. Guests were present from Stockbridge Grange No. 295. The Monterey Grange will host Berkshire South Pomona No. 25 on December 11 at 7 p.m.

Monterey members are asked to bring articles and cookies for the cheer boxes to be packed at the Lecturer's house. Our next meeting will be December 18 for our annual Christmas party for members, families, and friends. There will be a covered dish supper at 7 p.m. and a $2 gift exchange. Mark your gifts for man or woman; guests bringing a child are asked to bring a gift with a child's name on it. Non-members are welcome.

— Fraternally
Mary Wallace, Lecturer

THE OBSERVER - OCTOBER

October a year ago was the month that broke a summer-long drought with more than eleven inches of stormy rain. This year brought a near-normal October, a little wetter and slightly chillier than the average. There were balmy days of hazy sun filled with the sweet dust of decaying leaves, same as there were cool, gloomy, overcast skies that hunched up shoulders and pushed hands down into pockets as we felt winter coming on. Normal New England.

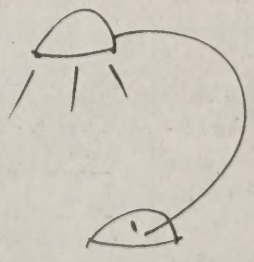
High temp (10/17)	69°
Low temp. (10/5)	27°
Avg. high temp.	58°
Avg. low temp.	38°
Avg. temp.	48°
Monthly norm. (Pitts.)	48.4°
Precip. occ.	11 days
Total precip. (all rain)	4.51"
Monthly norm. (Pitts.)	3.26"
High bar. press. (10/5)	30.57"
Low bar. press. (10/9)	29.34"
Low humidity (10/15)	61%
Avg. wind speed	3 mph
High wind gust (10/28)	37 mph

MAGGIE LEONARD

MONTEREY · BUILT SOME TIME AGO

SENATOR SAYS

As the 1995-96 legislative session winds to a close, I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the citizens of Monterey and other residents of Berkshire, Hampden, Hampshire, and Franklin Counties that make up the legislative district. Six years ago you placed your trust in me and I pledged to serve you to the best of my ability. I have truly enjoyed the opportunity to represent the people of Monterey and citizens of western Massachusetts in the state Senate.



Throughout my tenure I have had the privilege of working with a great number of dedicated local officials and citizens who are concerned about the well-being of our district and our state. I have consistently worked to be a strong advocate for the interests of the people of the district and am proud of the results which we have been able to achieve. Together we have worked tirelessly to improve the quality of life in our communities.

I recently met with Senator-elect Andrea Nuciforo and will work with him to ensure a smooth transition to the new legislative session. My staff and I will continue to be active in addressing Senate and constituent issues throughout the remaining weeks of my term. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me with your comments or concerns.

Again, thank you for a wonderful six years in the Massachusetts Senate. It has been a great honor to represent the people of the district. In closing, I would like to extend my best wishes to all for a happy and healthy holiday season and a successful New Year.

— State Senator Jane M. Swift

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ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Max the Poodle

Leaves Massachusetts

I'm Max, the biggest dog of Joan's tribe. Joan, the other dogs, even the cat are all female. I'm the only male in the crowd. I sorta take care of things. When Joan slips into her sandals while the others are eating or sleeping, I'm right by the door ready to go find out where she is going, and what she is up to.

We're loaded up to leave Monterey. The towing car is bulging, with "up here" things to be put into the little house "down there" (Alabama). The camper, also loaded, won't be back for two years. (Next year it will be traversing the West). First and foremost is our electric blanket, so important. Joan turns it on low, puts on a sheet and nestles beneath it, but the five of us lie on top (like summertime). Even though our bodies are warm, when Joan speaks "go to sleep, good night," you can see the steam in the air.

Joan spent hours and hours in her "attic" going through old pictures and letters, rushing downstairs often to warm up (a frigid October and November this year). Joan will see many old friends out west that she hasn't seen for many a year, and the papers she needs for a long period of time she has to have...a lot a time! Sometimes she looks frenzied!

The doctor tells Joan that the "tunnel" operation on her wrist has healed enough to go south—finally. We're off! We reach the campground in eastern Pennsylvania about dusk. Joan has called ahead. It's closed at this time of the year, but "if you only need electricity, not the bath house, no water, you can come." Joan finds a "pull-through," so we don't have to take off the little car. We go way back. Lots of trees, ground covered by a zillion leaves, nobody around. Joan takes off our leashes, and opens the door. Wow!

Kay arrives after awhile, hooks up her camper alongside us. Kay is a camper buddy. (Kay and Joan took their campers all the way to California one time). They haven't seen each other for a long time, and won't see each other again for a longer time. Kay has come down from upstate New York for this pow-wow.

Next morning an added pleasure: John Stowell (son of Stew and the late Jean Stowell, former Montereyans) comes over for coffee. He is the pastor of a nearby church. What a good time we have! Then we listen to the radio...Oh no! A tornado watch on in our area, hard rain, flooding and winds up to thirty-five miles an hour! John says, "Better stay put." He has to go. Kay and Joan decide to ask the owner to open the bath house, in case. We take Kay's camper down to the entrance. Nobody there. They've all gone. We drive back to our site, past all the empty campers and trailers. We are *alone!* Kay and Joan have a sumptuous dinner with wine, and wait. Hard rain yes, wind yes, but no tornado! Next morning we all say good-bye, the campers go in different directions. That night we go into a 76 Truck Stop. No trucks. The owner appears: "We're closed until Tuesday for renovations. The next stop is 140 miles down I-81." It's getting cold. It's getting dark. We pass a big mall...why not? Joan parks our entourage way back in the outskirts, hoping they won't notice us. Settle down for the night. It's getting bitterly cold. Joan puts on sweat pants under her dress and slip, two sweaters, and a coat (mittens given by Kathy in Great Barrington). We dogs each have sweaters (the cat, no way). The other three dogs keep walking out of their sweaters, but I'm big, my sweater fits! Joan tries to keep all five of us under the big warm Hudson Bay blanket she got in Montana. (No electricity, no electric blanket).

It's so cold nobody can go to sleep. The little three-pound Miss Katy is chattering like a magpie. Joan starts the motor. After it gets hot enough she puts on the heater: bliss. Good thing we've just filled with gas.

We left Massachusetts to get away from the cold. It's colder down here in the South! Into Lexington, Virginia. Joan finds a place right outside the door of White's 76 Truck Stop. Joan, a pro now, walks us to a grassy place. She goes inside and gets hot water to mix with our food. She leaves the motor on, heater low. (The night before it took $9 of gas for the motor to keep us warm.). Joan goes inside, carrying toothbrush, cards to write, her son's phone number (each table has a phone, you can eat and call, call and eat). I wait for her to come back. She always has a little bit of roast chicken, or meat ball, or shrimp. And so to sleep.

Next day up in the mountains the fields and house-tops are covered with snow. We take Route 77 from I-81 down to the old I-40, heading west to Ashland, North Carolina. There is a *real* mountain—down to third, then second. My trusty little van, going so slowly, pulls the little Toyota to the top. Joan gives our house a much-deserved rest while we take a walk.

Get to Stew Stowell's late afternoon, hook up to his son's mill building. After our dinner, Joan goes out with the others to a warm dinner in a warm restaurant. It was sixteen degrees here last night! When they come back I listen to what Joan is saying to Stew: "I could be home in Alabama day after tomorrow, but look here at the map: there is Route 26, a four-lane highway that will take me diagonally from here to Savannah, Georgia, in one day! Greg and Gissele have a new house in Jacksonville. That's not far, and the Lows have a big rally outside St. Augustine." I, Max, say, "Here we go again!"

— Max

(as told to Joan Woodard Reed)

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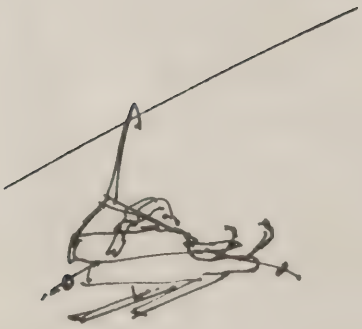
Now is the time of shadows
Great wings of darkness
On the dreaming hills
Shifting shades
On dull, dead meadows
Stark silhouettes
Pierce the brief, bright skies

The gods of cold sleep
Ride the clouds from the north
Driving all warm blood
To the nest, to the hearth
Hoarse voices chant
A spell of frigid peace
Hoary hands draw
Summer's heat from the earth

Come my sweet, come to the fire
While sharp light dances
On hard, heavy water
As the land spins silent
Through the dark trance of winter
In my arms there is comfort
In my heart, desire

— Nick Hardcastle



RUSTED CHAIR

safety off
breathing stilled
he sits alone
in rusted chair

through hemlock boughs
and bended birch
mountain laurel
his piercing stare

she walks in silence
her grace of God
no antlers shield
she's blending in

he rests, he waits
for twigs to snap
she does not know
he sits down wind

crack! the shot
it echoes through
the trees, the rocks
death's wind blows

he bends, she looks
from frozen eye
still warm life
blood river flows

awake in sweat
the nightmare gone
'til on my walk
I saw it there

in ghosts and shadows
in dappled sun
the rain laid claim
to rusted chair

— John B. Humphrey

WINTER SCYTHING

The grass is stiff and white with frozen dew
that's soon encrusted on my scytheblade, too;

This second growth's a tousled tangled mess:
The work is more, the gathered hay is less.

The shearing of my sharpened, vorpal blade
Makes wilderness into a grassy glade;

The pleasure's great in having learned this skill—
After all these years I feel it still:

The sheer delight in stretching back and arms—
And on this frosty dawn it keeps me warm!

This season's many benefits are gratis—
Such as the absence, everywhere, of gnats.

The luminosity of air, all filled with mist
Gives the morning light a poignant twist:

The southing sun, still tangled in the trees
Is nature's own quotidian masterpiece.

Why I have such luck is not quite clear:
The privilege, right now, of being here!

— David P. McAllester

DON BUNYAN

I met a man
whose heart is like an old iron stove
kept high in some unlikely cabin
atop the mountain
of an eternal Orion's month
into it he throws his women cheerfully
like split trees
who have yielded their folded wet leaves
and whatever fruit
in it they burn and glow and fuse
to what warms him
and one can foresee
that one day he will rise early
and throw in the last of logs
yet, put on the kettle
spit and smile
and rub his great hands
before the sun comes up
over a final winter.

— A. O. Howell

MY LIFE AS A BOWL

Grace, cracked and imperfect
the stoned edges of Spectacle Pond
high fired in an ageless glaze
made in granite rock and quartz
deep enough and wide to float
some simmering stew
what swims in broth: man or greens?
what nourishes: broth or bowl?
Serving you serves me serves all
swimming from rim to rim

— Richard Zukowski

THE TALL PINES

The view to the south is beautiful;
The pines on the left are tall.
I worked down there in the thirties,
Trying to get away from it all.

The place is like a cathedral.
Pine needles are brushing the sky.
Way over there in the corner,
You can hear a sleepy crow's cry.

The under story of hemlock,
So thick that it covers the ground.
These are the trees to replace
Tall pines when they have come down.

The deer also like the hemlock,
Their numerous beds tell us so.
A quiet place to give birth,
And watch their spotted fawns grow.

Sitting there in the coolness,
The place is so quiet and still.
I can hear the babbling brook,
Down at the foot of the hill.

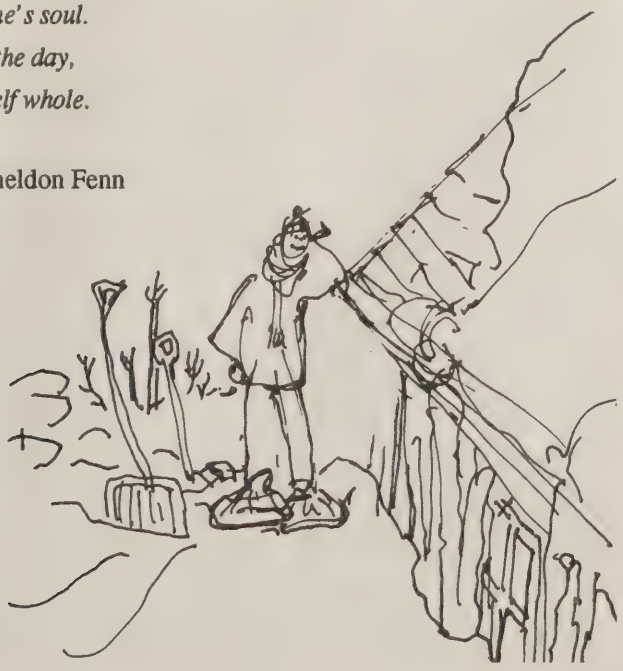
Being at peace with the world,
It's a place to restore one's soul.
Forgetting the cares of the day,
Here one can find himself whole.

— Sheldon Fenn

I hate this silence
It brings no peace
All I hear
Are my thoughts
Chewing their tails
Fear rattles low
Squat in a corner
Dread scuttles near
In this dull, dark void

Come closer my strength
Hold me hard in your arms
Crush the gross worm of doubt
Its slick trail of harm
I claw your shoulder
Cry at your breast
These creatures release me
Your heart brings me rest

— Lesley Givet



BREAKFAST ON THE KANYAKUMARI EXPRESS

Since I got home from India four days ago I have been enjoying my jet-lag. Today for the first time I slept past 2:30 a.m., by a couple of hours, and I'm worried that my body is getting adjusted. Pretty soon I'll be altogether home and I'll have to schedule visits to the map and the photo album in order to remember this trip. But right now I get four or five hours of darkness every morning when the phone doesn't ring and nobody needs to be fed or driven to ballet. This is the time I savor India.

Today my enduring memory is of the fourteen hours we spent aboard the Kanyakumari Express, second class sleeper, our train from Bangalore to Ernakulam on the Malabar coast of South India. Priya took us to the station after supper with a car and driver she'd commandeered from her brother-in-law's autoparts factory. After this there would be no more cushy travelling, no more hotel reservations in advance, no friends or connections as we headed south. We had one more week to go, and were tasting the delicious fear and freedom of adventure: no set plans.

The platform was long and dark, but our ticket had a car number on it, and when we had hiked to that car and I'd fished out my flashlight, we could see our names, printed on a piece of paper pasted to the outside of the car! This was like seeing our names in the credits of a movie; it was too miraculous. We stashed our luggage, took our places on the padded benches, and switched on the ceiling fan.

"Too bad your seats are down by the end of the car, so close to the latrine," Priya said. We wrinkled our noses and said we knew it would pass, we'd get adjusted. Besides, it would be handy in the middle of the night. Priya kissed us good-bye and left us. It was as if someone had just thrown us in the pond, confident we could swim on our own now.

As the train gathered speed and rattled southward we put the window up and looked out the bars as the buildings got smaller and sparser. The evening lights in India are somehow muted compared to the ones here—maybe it's low wattage, maybe the haze of air pollution from the unscrubbed, leaded gas. At each station people got off and on. My bench (for sleeping or sitting) backed against a thin metal partition, and on the other side there was another bench somehow tied to

mine. So all night whenever someone on the other side stood up or sat down I got bounced the way you do on a seesaw. It made us all giggle—especially when I was reading bedtime stories to the girls and got these hiccups bumped into my voice.

This trip to India was for them, my kids, ages ten and twelve. They were born in India, adopted out as babies, and all their lives have been wanting to go back. We have always said, "Yeah, someday we'll go. Don't worry." But the truth was we couldn't quite picture it, from the financial to the physical. The kids know when we are dreaming, hoping, and I don't think they thought this day would ever come, just like we still don't have a barn built. But our stars came together and there we were. We'd visited the orphanage in Delhi, and the Taj Mahal, and our potter friend in Bangalore. Now we were on our own. I lay down on the padded bench clutching my pillow: a leather purse of my mother's, containing our plane tickets home, passports, traveller's checks. I knew that when I woke up we'd be in Kerala, southwesternmost state in India. There would be palm trees, rice paddies, houses made of woven palm mats. I would have to figure out where to spend the next night, where to get breakfast. The kids slept on upper benches, with their books and dolls arranged around their heads, like me and my purse.

We woke up early in Kerala, so knocked out by tropical beauty that we could hardly speak. Bright blue birds, kingfishers and rollers, sat on wires and watched the dawn spread over the brilliant green of growing rice plants. White egrets caught the sun in the tops of tamarinds and palms. Coming into a town the walls were painted with graceful looping advertisements and slogans in Malayalam, the mother-tongue of Kerala. The letters are made of loops, swirls, hooks below the line, as if all the words are made of cursive lower-case m's, n's, j's, and g's.

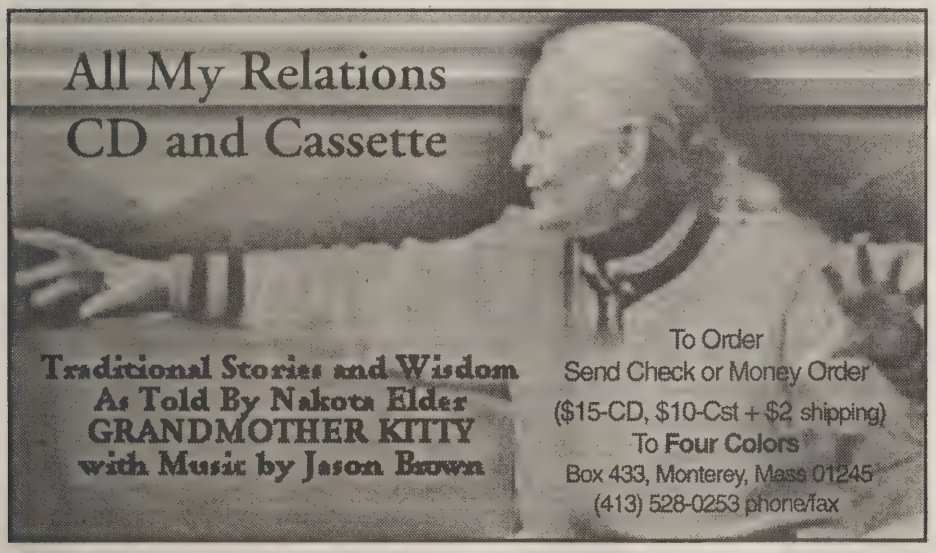
A man got on with attache case in one hand and breakfast in the other. I came out of my tropical reverie and knew I was hungry. He sat near us, and we watched him eat. In his left hand he held a big piece of banana leaf. This was his plate, shiny, green, thick and impervious to temperature and liquid. Somehow, the way he held it, it was cupped a little. On it there was a big pancake made of a batter of rice and lentils, soaked and ground up and freshly fried right there at the train station, on the platform. This dosa was folded over and nestled against a steaming vegetable sauce containing tomatoes, carrots, onion, green chilies, and spices—and a hard-boiled egg.

It only took me about ten seconds to get one of my own. I was off the train,

onto the platform, and back again with my treasure. The kids barely had time to blink, couldn't consider their fates if I'd gotten waylaid and the train had rolled off without me. I carefully scraped the peppery sauce off the egg and some of the dosa, and broke these up with my fingers to slip into the gaping mouths of my hungry kids. They got a little, but pretty soon all that was left was soaked in spices, more my kind of meal than theirs.

We're home now. Kids are up early like me, playing with the cat, taking a bath, waiting for day in Monterey. I spent some time this morning looking up dosai in my Indian cookbooks. It's not going to be easy: I have to find some urud dal, a kind of dry bean I don't grow or see in Price Chopper. I have to make my kitchen as warm as Kerala, so the batter can ferment for ten hours. Maybe I won't be able to recreate this after all, but as long as I have my morning hours of jet-lag I can pretend. It may have been the kids' trip to India, but it certainly was my breakfast on the train.

— Bonner J. McAllester



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WILDLIFE SURVEY

The Landscape. With the onset of winter we see more and less. Most of the birds and flowers are gone but our space is miraculously enlarged. We realize all over again that we really are in big hills as we see one vista after another just from the road, without having to make the climb to some high, rocky knob above the trees. The colors are brown, grey, and broad swaths of evergreen, suitable for somber majesty.

Predators. Coyotes are in the news again, with continued raids on Gould Farm's sheep flock. An ingenious pair got under the fence, taking advantage of the human lunch hour, and left havoc behind them on Wednesday, November 13. It really was the "wolf coming down on the fold." The recent two-to-one vote in favor of Proposition 1, banning most kinds of wildlife trapping, shows a broad public concern for animal rights. It will be interesting to see how this plays out in the predictable increase, in numbers and boldness, of our predators. Speaking of which, Dale Duryea caught two bobcats in his coyote sets this season. One was young and could be released with no problem; the other was a fifty-pound male!

Re-emergent Mammals. The most spectacular return to these parts is that of the moose. The latest sightings were November 14 in the swampland on Lowland Farm near Harmon Road, and just after noon on November 23 on the flat east of Belcher Square in Great Barrington, where Sanjiban Sellew pulled over, as did four other people, to watch a female moose (no antlers) walking through the field about seventy-five yards from the road. Sanjiban guesses the animal weighed about 800 pounds. He got a good look through binoculars, and was surprised to note that her rear legs were white halfway up.

A mother black bear with two cubs was seen in a trailer park in Lee the week of November 3.

Our largest rodents, beavers, were so valuable for felted hats that they were trapped out of Europe in the seventeenth century and out of New England by 1690. Our own Mahican Indians were hunting for them as far west as Ohio and as far south as Virginia. Now they are back and the Wildlife and Fisheries Department has booked over one hundred complaints this year of damage due to beaver industry. We can expect a dramatic increase in these workaholic flood engineers. Dale has answered two calls in Monterey recently, one on Brett Road and another on New Marlborough Road. He saw another large beaver November 12 taking a rest among the rocks exposed by the drawdown at The Point on Parker's Cove. He had made a comfortable bed of twigs and leaves and ambled off in no particular hurry when Dale got too near.

Don Amstead spotted some bank-dwelling beavers in Brewer Pond, and Mike Mielke saw an unusual sight: an otter sunning itself on a float on Lake Garfield November 14.

Fungi. Alice Somers writes from Florida: "It must have been a good season (in Monterey) in September and October after our rainy summer... Eleanor Kimberley's picture of the *amanita Caesarea* came out well. That mushroom sprang up in the middle of our lawn in Sandisfield on July 15... I enjoyed reading about Laura Gaccione's mushroom hunt, but her description does not fit "hen o' the woods (*grifola frondosa*). A "fat, juicy, frilly yellow fungus" sounds more like "chicken of the woods" (*laetiporus sulphureus*). "I am delving into the medicinal uses of fungi now, and new information is appearing all the time..." Alice enclosed an article from the November 5 *New York Times* entitled "Common Fungi May Be Source for Powerful New Drugs," by Carol Kaesuk Yoon. The article told of a group of students at Cornell University who found a fungus on the head of a beetle grub that was in "a sexual form crucial to identifying the mold that produces the billion-dollar drug cyclosporin, which is widely used to prevent the rejection of transplanted organs." Chemists, conservationists, and phramaceutical corporations are combining their resources for directed prospecting in microbial ecology. "A single gram of temperate forest soil could harbor as many as 10,000 species of bacteria. Yet worldwide only 4,000 species have actually been studied and identified by scientists. Even fewer have been screened to see if they contain any chemicals that can be used for drugs." This quote is from the article in the *Times* and reminds us of the vast world of micro-organisms of which we're all still unaware. I am reminded of a phrase I heard recently, referring to our preoccupation with large life-forms: "the charismatic megafauna."

— David P. McAllester

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P. MURKETT

Auctioneer Cheryl Hutto at work dispersing some of Edith Wilson's estate.

AN AUCTION AT HOME

An auction of art, antiques, furnishings, and household miscellany from the estate of the late Edith Wilson was held at the firehouse on a bright, cool Saturday, November 16. The event had the convivial warmth of a large family picnic, with antique mavens and bargain hunters adding a little zing. Fire Company members opened their kitchen, grilling hot-dogs, selling sandwiches, soda, donuts, and coffee. Everyone seemed happy.

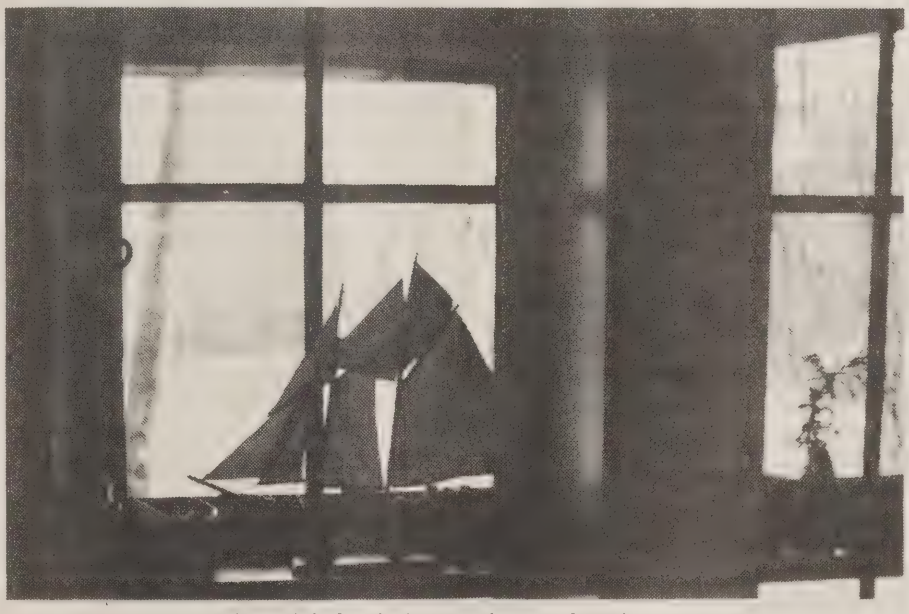
Charlie Flint, an old hand at such events who appraised the estate and ran the auction, opened the proceedings with a short speech full of affection for the person he never knew who made and gathered the things about to be sold. Auctioneer Cheryl Hutto (once a Monterey resident) called for bids, and the paper plates numbered with magic marker popped up and down for several hours before people left with their bargain box lots, treasured canvases and drawings, carefully chosen antiques.

Peggy Reeves (also a former Montereyan) went home with two small antique lap desks; among the notes and papers left inside, some in Edith's hand and some in Margery McLaughlin's, was one scrap bearing the phrase "Silken scarf of fog mist/thrown over the hill tops." At the top of another were noted the date ("9-5-76") and the occasion ("—on passing Boot Hill") for these lines:

> and it seemed to me
> I felt
> rather than heard
> the soft thumping of tails.

Proceeds from the auction will benefit the McLaughlin/Wilson Scholarship Fund. (See related story, p. 3.)

— Peter Murkett



P. MURKETT

A model ship in its new home after the auction.

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SITING CHURCHES

Kathy Page Wasiuk is author once again of this installment in our series on the history of Monterey United Church of Christ. Planning is now under way for restoration and renovation of the church.

By 1800 two new churches had been built in Tyringham to take the place of the original, which had burned. The first church had been placed at the center of a Township Number One mapped on paper, but the two new churches reflected the settled town's real geography, and the details of their establishment tell a story of change in the intertwined aspects of social life—economic and political as well as spiritual.

Two From One. Margery Mansfield and Julius Miner, co-authors in 1955 of the wonderful little volume entitled *New England's Monterey*, wrote that the location of the second church apparently started the "variance" between residents of northern (Hop Brook) and southern Tyringham which eventually divided the town into the two corporations of Monterey and Tyringham (Miner and Mansfield, p. 38). Residents of the Hop Brook community had long made the steep climb up the north side of early Tyringham's central hill to the first church. The journey was ever a challenge in winter, mud season, and rain. A new church, begun in 1796 and located by the old parade ground at the intersection of Beartown and Carrington-Batelle Roads, was even farther from Hop Brook. Getting there took Hop Brook parishioners *over* the ridge and half a mile *down*hill.

This second meeting house was built by subscribers who underwrote its construction and pledged its use "for the accommodation of those of the inhabitants of said town who live southerly of the north end of the north range of house lots" (Subscription agreement, February 2, 1796). They were people of consequence, seated at the front of the building, but northern residents were turning away from their church. The people living in Hop Brook planned their own meeting house, located in their center, and began to build late in 1796 (Bidwell, p. 613). They also proved adept at ducking church taxes: fifty-three Hop Brook residents refused to pay their annual tax to support the southern ministry in 1800, claiming membership in the Baptist sect. Methodists had begun preaching to settlers in the north end as early as 1791, and they would eventually build a church as well. Calvin Harlow had been authorized to gather the Shakers of Tyringham in 1790, and by 1800 that community numbered fifty-three souls (Brewer, p. 232). Clearly, the church faced competition from other denominations as well as from the northern site.

Reverend Joseph Avery, appointed in 1789, held the church together for a while. During his nineteen years of service he was admired by his flock, but the number of those who did not attend and yet were still taxed for support of the minister grew. They resisted the tax, leaving the town unable to pay Avery's salary. In 1807 an article to dismiss him appeared on the warrant for town meeting; the anti-tax forces were organized, present, and voting, and the article passed by a narrow margin. Out of work and owed money, Avery sued the town successfully, but many Hop Brook residents restated their claim to membership in another denomination, and were thus not liable for the taxes due. It was a significant low point.

Disestablishment and Gain. No longer able to support their church by taxation, men living in the Old Center organized themselves and paid off Avery. In November of 1808 they agreed to form a society and raise money to support "a settled Teacher of Piety and Religion" for the meeting house. Ten months later, a similar list—this time, of women's names—appeared. Together they called themselves the First Congregational Society of Tyringham, and the new Society was incorporated by an act of the legislature the following June.

In the four years after the dismissal of Reverend Avery, ninety-six people joined the church, surely a vote of confidence in the new organization, a revival of interest in things spiritual, and perhaps a comment about the disagreement and strife at the end of Reverend Avery's tenure, although he continued living in town until his death in 1814. A new minister, Reverend J. Warren Dow, was appointed in 1811.

The Society contrived various ways each year to raise money. They accepted donations, of course, and actively solicited them. From time to time they also sold pews in the meeting house, bluntly bypassing committee evaluation of individual worth. They also relied on revivals of religious fervor, which occurred with some regularity not only in the Berkshires, but all along the eastern seaboard during the period 1815-1830. Membership in the second meeting house fell

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considerably during an epidemic in 1814 (fifty townspeople died, likely of typhoid fever), but swelled in 1816, again in 1818, 1821, and 1827, as religious fervor impelled people to church. Led by Reverend Dow, church membership grew by 164 people by 1827 (Dooly *et al.*, p. 21, 31).

Interest was strong, membership was solid, and the town was growing. The capital which had been collected became a source of loans for townspeople, and interest on it was used to pay a portion of the minister's salary. Officers invested the Society's capital in land, and there are numerous deeds recorded carrying mortgages made out to the Society. It eventually loaned money to the town in the form of bonds, and paid highway taxes to the state as well as a tax on the interest the capital generated. Prominent members contributed money to fill the gap between the minister's salary and the amount gained at interest. Once, late in the nineteenth century, the Society literally came to the defense of one of the town's men: Allen Mansir was sued by Lewis Carter, a harness maker in Great Barrington. Mansir had locked Carter out of his tenement on Railroad Street and taken Carter's goods, presumably for nonpayment of rent. The Society paid Mansir's lawyer, the fine assessed when Mansir lost, and the court costs for both the initial case and the appeal, where Mansir failed to appear.

The Society was at the center, it would seem, not only of the spiritual life of the town, but of its financial life as well.

— Kathy Page Wasiuk

Marked references at Monterey Library.

†Miner, Julius, and Mansfield, Margery, *New England's Monterey: Stories of the Town, Its Church*, Pridemark Press, Baltimore, Maryland, 1955.

The subscription agreement for the second meeting house, dated February 2, 1796. (Archives of The Bidwell House.)

†Bidwell, O. C., in *History of Berkshire County*, J. B. Beers & Co., New York, 1885.

Brewer, Priscilla J., *Shaker Communities, Shaker Lives*, University Press of New England, c. 1886.

†Dooly, John, et al. *History of the First Congregational Society in Monterey, Massachusetts*, Courier Book and Job Press, Gt. Barrington, c. 1900.

UPON MY WORD!

The author John Michell recently reflected on the word "focus," noting the lack of it these days. By definition, the word means a gathering point of light, and its origin is the Latin word for a fireside. Thus the fireplace or hearth is the focus of a home, as the heart is that of the body, or love the focus connecting us to spirit. No wonder that in many cultures prayers are said by the women laying or lighting a fire. It can be a sacred act. As the cold and darkness of winter enclose us here in the Berkshires, many of us have the opportunity to light and enjoy a fire in our homes and meditate on the dancing flames of warmth. Perhaps we can reflect on what place is, could, or should be the focus of our community. The winter solstice ("sun-standing") marks the yearly rebirth of waxing light, life, and, by extension, love. May we all celebrate this holy season focused on peace, and with joy!

— Alice O. Howell

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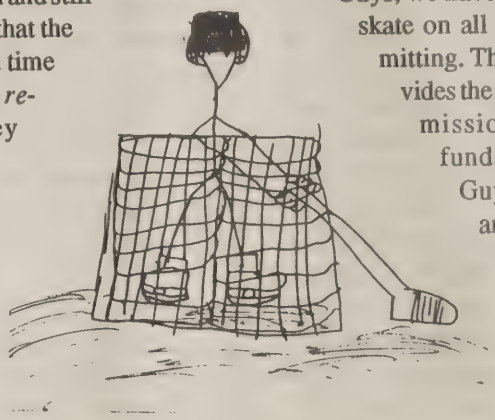
NOTES FOR SOCCER MOMS

It happens every year around this time, all over town, heck all over the country for that matter: the front halls of America fill up with hockey equipment. 'Tis the season, as they say, for skates, pads, sticks, pucks, and, in the case of our household, a serious volume of goalie gear. Perhaps that is why I have noticed this phenomenon; I live with two goalies.

It all started innocently enough when our family became involved in youth hockey eight years ago. I can remember, after hearing about the program, being vaguely surprised at the magnitude of the commitment. "You mean that these infants are going to wear uniforms and travel to play games? You're kidding, right?" The guys looked at me with a bemused expression. "Of course the kids travel and play games. It's hockey!" they exclaimed. From our small beginning with Sheffield Youth Hockey (Original name; the organization is now called Berkshire Tri-State Youth Hockey, and team is known as The Berkshire Tri-State Rattlers. Get it straight.) we have branched out into Monterey hockey at the local rink, Berkshire Men's Hockey at Berkshire School, and the Housatonic Valley Hockey League at Salisbury School. Add to that coaching, scheduling, and administration, and you don't have a sport, you have a career change.

I regarded a familiar scene standing in a friend's entryway last week: several mammoth bags with hockey gear overflowing into the hall, and a small path, only for the very athletic, weaving through the maze of stuff. Only for athletes because this obstacle course is strewn with skate blades. I commiserated with my friend over the loss of our front halls and mud rooms for the next three months, and we compared sob stories about the grueling schedule that results from combined participation in youth and adult hockey. Personally, I am convinced that my husband is involved in a top-secret government experiment to see just how much hockey one person can be involved in and still function. I know that the guys have a great time because all this *requires* that they skate and play hockey. No problem. However, the skills I've had to develop for hockey consist of driving long distances in terrible weather, and waiting for hours in cold rinks. These skills have never come to me naturally, and, as you may have guessed, I am not the strong silent type.



During these many winters there have been high points and low points. There is the fun of spending time with my son, and seeing those moments of glory when the team really pulls together and gives it their all, win or lose. On the downside, there was the time I drove two hours to Saratoga to the wrong rink. After hanging around this wrong rink for quite some time we were instructed that there was another rink down the road. It was by then game time, I had the team's only goalie, and I was at the wrong rink. We drove to the right rink at approximately 80 m.p.h. to find that the game had been postponed for forty-five minutes. The Lord works in mysterious ways.

I must say, however, that I do have admiration for the way hockey mania has aided and abetted the local skating scene. Due to the combined efforts of the Monterey Parks Commission, the Monterey Fire Company, and the Hockey Guys, we have a really great rink to skate on all winter, weather permitting. The Fire Company provides the space, the Parks Commission provides some funds, and the Hockey Guys construct the rink anew each year, and help maintain it. And let's not forget that amazing fund-raising effort two years ago that resulted in fabulous lighting and a heated changing room. Of course, we all look forward to the fabled Monterey Cup, a hockey tournament held every year with teams hailing from as far away as Hartsville to see whose names will be etched on the sacred chalice as the year's champions.

Officially this is my son's last year of Berkshire Tri-State Youth Hockey. He has been in the program for eight years and is a Bantam. We have mused about all the free time we'll have next winter, and I have wondered what on earth we will do with it. As crazy as it seems, I can't remember what winters were like B.H., and I can't imagine what they will be like without it. However, I am not the naive, unsuspecting woman that I was eight years ago, and I have a feeling that even though the program ends for my son, the hockey goes on. And on.

— Maggie Leonard

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BOOK REVIEW

A Cottage in Portugal

by Richard Hewitt
Illustrations by Barbara Finn Hewitt
Simon & Schuster, New York, 1996
287 pp.

It's been a long time since a book made me laugh so hard that I cried. Such a book is *A Cottage in Portugal*, written by Richard Hewitt and charmingly illustrated by Barbara Finn Hewitt, both Monterey residents.

It's the story of their attempt to settle in the old world in search of a simpler life. They arrive in their chosen part of Portugal, outside Lisbon, in a torrential rainstorm, and begin their quest for a "ruin" to call their own. As they rub up against the locals, without wealth to insulate them, almost every facet of daily life becomes the stuff of hilarious anecdote. They are at once enamored of the countryside, rich history and culture, and utterly baffled by medieval bureaucracies and the customs of their neighbors. Nevertheless, they persevere in the purchase and renovation of a ruined cottage. They make friends of the neighbors and the village, learning to honor and embrace local ways while realizing that their very presence is bringing change.

In one episode there is a celebration at the local bar honoring the Americans with a "real Portuguese delicacy" that turns out to be cod heads—"loathesome food" to Richard and Barbara. They negotiate the event without harm to themselves or their new friendships by thinking on their feet. Richard reflects:

> But the room was filled with noise and hearty laughter, and I came to realize that the joy we had come to know here in the village stemmed from situations exactly like this. It was the anticipation of the unexpected that kept our lives so full and intriguing. And when it happened, we could never know just what to expect next. António might come to work, or he might not; Alberto might continue to crosswire the electrical circuits, or he might finally set it right; the village might have water someday, but then again it might not.
>
> It was a gentle and benign form of chaos, and only a madman would dare dream of order and perfection. But in this sunny village no one seemed bothered by uncertainty. Indeed, in some way they seemed to relish it, for in the end it brought us all together.

Mr. Hewitt writes evocative descriptions of sights and sounds, and his bemused point of view rings true throughout. Anyone drawn to the search for a simpler life will do well to pour a glass of Colares red, and read *A Cottage in Portugal*.

— Michèle Miller

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ALTON C. HEATH, SR.

The Monterey Toy Maker, Alton C. Heath, Sr., died at age ninety-six on Friday, November 15, at Great Barrington Healthcare, where he had been a resident for the past fifteen years. Mr. Heath was born in Tyringham on August 22, 1900, the son of Frank and Maude Woodin Heath. He attended local schools and lived in Lee until 1966, when he moved to Monterey to make his home with his daughter, Mrs. Mabel E. Sheridan. Mr. Heath was employed by the former Kimball Trucking and Palmer Lines, both in Great Barrington, from 1928 until his retirement in 1962. He had previously been employed by the former Eaton-Dikeman Paper Company in Lee during the 1920s, and was last employed by the former Brown's Express in Pittsfield.

Alton Heath was known as the Monterey Toy Maker for the sturdy, colorful vehicles he fashioned from scraps of plywood and lumber, painted and decorated with caps, tacks, and other appropriate hardware representing truck lights, horns, etc.

His wife, the former Fanny J. Brazee, whom he married in 1918 and with whom he had eleven children, died in 1954.

Besides his daughter of Monterey, he leaves three sons, Cortland F. Heath of Tyringham, Harold E. Heath of Lee, and George H. Heath of Chatham, New York; three other daughters, Mrs. Janice M. Washburn of Hickory, North Carolina, Mrs. Kathleen Pratt of Monterey, and Mrs. Pauline A. Johndrow of Lee; a brother, Nelson Heath of Dalton; a sister, Mrs. Hazel Clause of Rosamond, California; fifty grandchildren, fifty-six great-grandchildren, and ten great-great grandchildren.

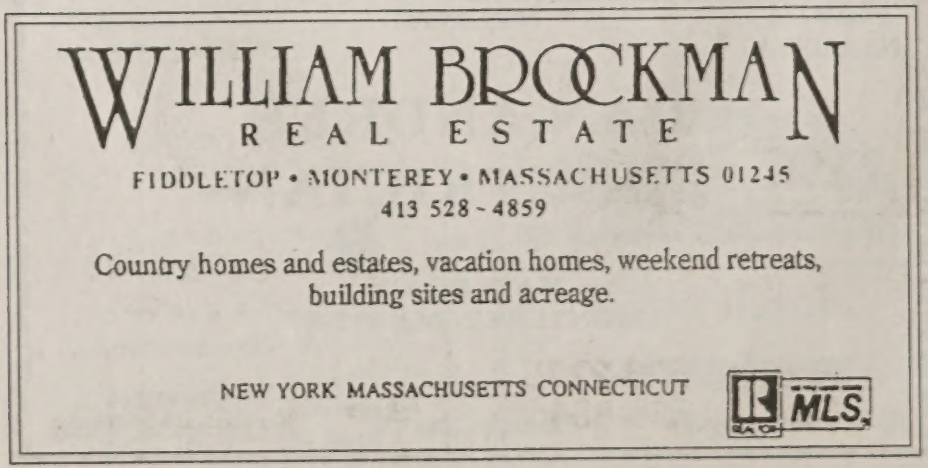
PERSONAL NOTES

Our hearty congratulations to **Josh** and **Ginny Allentuck** of Main Road on the birth of their son **James Abraham**. Their first child, James was born on October 9 weighing a healthy 9 lbs., 4 oz. We are pleased to hear that all is well and wish this new family all the best!

And, congratulations to **Lorenzo** and **Deborah Savona** on the birth of their son **Jacob** on October 17. Also, our best wishes to proud maternal grandmother Ruth Milser of Beartown Mountain Road and San Francisco. The Savonas live in Boston, often spend weekends in Monterey, and are looking forward to their first trip here with Jacob!

Hats off to senior **Morgan Clawson** and junior **Bethany Sadlowski** who were recently inducted into the National Honor Society. Following the candlelight ceremony held at Monument Mountain Regional High School in Great Barrington, members and their families were honored at a dinner. Students inducted into the Society must meet high standards in scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Be proud and pat yourselves on the back both of you! Great work!

Kudos to all Monterey students in grades seven through twelve named to the honor roll for the first marking period at Mount Everett Regional in Sheffield. In grade nine **David Ohman** earned honors, and **Cedric Mason** made honors in grade ten. **Jeremy Vallianos** achieved honors in grade eleven, and in grade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twelve **Shaylan Burkhart**, **William Conklin**, **Kathryn Kopetchny**, and **Jeffrey Pilot** earned honors. In grade eight **Hannah Bracken** and **Katherine Vallianos** earned high honors and **Kimberly Gero** achieved honors. What a good start for all of you! Keep up the great work! (P.S. I always have the feeling I might inadvertently miss a Monterey name on the list—please let me know!)

Best wishes to recent Fairview Hospital patients **George Emmons** and **Lena Pedersen**. George has a brand spanking new hip and Lena has a few extra screws and pins on her femur after breaking her leg in a fall. Though neither are quite ready for the two-step, we wish them well and are glad they are home in Monterey making steady progress.

Very happy birthday wishes this month to **Stefan Grotz** on December 1, to **Matthew Christopher** on December 2, to **Graham** and **Madigan Hines** on December 3, to **Walter Andersen**, **Elizabeth Deloy**, and **Karen Schulze** on December 5, to **Jacob Edelman** and **Simon Spagnoletti** on December 7, to **Mike Mielke III** on December 8, to **Natasha Grotz** on December 12, to **Stacy Ingher** and **Morgan Clawson** on December 20, to **Donald Amstead** on December 25 and to **Eleisa Dean** and **Eliana Schulze** on December 27.

MAGGIE LEONARD

Thanks for sharing your news this past year! Please continue to share news, birthday greetings, etc. by calling me at 528-4519, or you can jot items down and drop them in the mail to me, just Route 23. Here's hoping the holiday past was a good one for all of you with lots to be thankful for. And Joy & Peace for the Holiday Season to come. Ciao.

— Stephanie Grotz

CALENDAR

Sundays, December 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 AA meetings, 9 a.m. in the Monterey Firehouse, Main Road.

Saturday, December 7 Holiday Open House at The Bidwell House, 2–5 p.m., free for Museum members only. Information, 528-6888.

Sunday, December 8 Yuletide at The Bidwell House: period holiday decorations, punch and cookies by the fireside, ornament making for children, 12 noon–4 p.m. Adults $ 6, children under 16 $2. Information, 528-6888.

Wednesdays, December 11 and 18 Meeting of the Monterey Grange No. 291, 7 p.m. at the Grange Hall.

Friday, December 13
Free luncheon by Council on Aging, noon, Town Hall basement.
Free choral concert at Main House, Gould Farm, 7:30 p.m. Community invited.

Tuesday, December 17 Free blood pressure clinic, 9–10:30 a.m. in the basement room of the Monterey Grange (town offices), Main Road.

Wednesday, December 18 Meeting of the Southern Berkshire Solid Waste District, 7 p.m. in the church basement.

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Contributions from local artists this month: Maureen Banner, p. 13; Frank D'Amato, p. 8; Bonner McAllester, p. 14; Pete Murkett, pp. 3, 10, 12, 15; Riley Murkett, pp. 1, 12, 20.

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